

Message Text

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EUR:JAARMITAGE

NEA:ALATHERTON

S/S MR.ORTIZ

C:JMONTGOMERY

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O R 091520Z APR 76 ZFF4

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T STATE 086109

NODIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 2 LINES 3 AND 16 OMITTED)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, LE

SUBJECT: SOVIET COMMUNICATION ON LEBANON

1. SOVIET CHARGE (VORONTSOV) TELEPHONED SECRETARY, APRIL 2, AND STATED THAT REPORTS OF AMERICAN NAVAL DEPLOYMENTS TOWARD LEBANON HAD CAUSED CONCERN IN MOSCOW AND COULD COMPLICATE SITUATION IN LEBANON. VORONTSOV STATEMENTS WERE SUBSEQUENTLY PASSED TO DEPARTMENT IN FORM OF NON-PAPER. NON-PAPER MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

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THE SOVIET UNION ADHERES TO PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN LEBANON AND EXPECTS SAME FROM US. QUESTIONS OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF LEBANON SHOULD BE DECIDED BY LEBANESE THEMSELVES. US "INTERFERENCE" IN LEBANESE INTERNAL AFFAIRS WOULD LEAD TO SHARP AGGRAVATION OF

SITUATION IN MIDDLE EAST AND ELSEWHERE. MOSCOW HOPES THAT THE US WILL TREAT THIS SOVIET COMMUNICATION WITH UNDERSTANDING AND WILL NOT TAKE ANY STEPS THAT WOULD TRANSFORM THE LEBANESE INTERNAL CRISIS INTO AN INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT.

2. DEPARTMENT REPLIED TO SOVIETS, APRIL 3, MAKING FOLLOWING POINTS. US HAS SOUGHT TO PREVENT INTERNAL LEBANESE CRISIS FROM LEADING TO REGIONAL CONFLICT. TO THIS END, US HAS SUPPORTED SYRIAN EFFORTS TO HELP LEBANESE PARTIES ACHIEVE A POLITICAL SOLUTION, FOR WHICH ARRANGEMENTS WORKED OUT UNDER SYRIAN AUSPICES AT END OF JANUARY PROVIDE A REASONABLE BASIS. US HAS CONSISTENTLY URGED OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO REFRAIN FROM INTERVENING. US HAS EXERCISED UTMOST RESTRAINT WITH REGARD TO LEBANESE SITUATION AND HAS NOT LENT SUPPORT TO ANY OF CONTENDING FACTIONS, BUT ONLY TO LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF COUNTRY. OTHER COUNTRIES, HOWEVER, HAVE GIVEN SUPPORT TO ONE LEBANESE GROUP OR ANOTHER, LEADING TO SITUATION IN WHICH SURVIVAL OF ONE OF COMMUNITIES IS THREATENED. US BELIEVES COUNTRIES BACKING FACTIONS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY HAVE RESPONSIBILITY TO EXERCISE RESTRAINING INFLUENCE ON THESE FACTIONS. FURTHER CIVIL CONFLICT IN LEBANON WILL HEIGHTEN RISK OF BROADER HOSTILITIES AND US BELIEVES ALL RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD PREVAIL UPON THE FACTIONS TO SEEK A POLITICAL SOLUTION AND TO REFRAIN FROM FURTHER FIGHTING. US WILL DO WHAT IT CAN TO THIS END. SO LONG AS OTHERS EXERCISE SIMILAR RESTRAINT, US IS CONFIDENT THAT PRESENT SITUATION CAN BE CONTAINED AND DANGERS OF IT DEVELOPING INTO WIDER CONFLICT CAN BE AVERTED.

3. FYI: FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS APPROVED FOR USE BY DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN, BUT QUESTION DID NOT COME UP IN DAILY BRIEFING APRIL 5.

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BEGIN QUOTE: I CAN CONFIRM THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED A NOTE FROM THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT CONCERNING US NAVAL UNITS IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN. WE ARE RESPONDING TODAY TO THE SOVIET NOTE. AS HAS BEEN REPORTED BEFORE, SHIPS OF THE SIXTH FLEET HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO STAND BY IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN IN THE EVENT THAT THEY MIGHT BE NEEDED TO ASSIST IN THE EVACUATION OF US CITIZENS STILL IN LEBANON. I MIGHT ALSO POINT OUT THAT WE ARE NOT PRESENTLY ANTICIPATING THAT FURTHER EVACUATION BEYOND THAT ALREADY CARRIED OUT OVER RECENT MONTHS BY REGULARLY SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS FROM BEIRUT AIRPORT WILL BE REQUIRED. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

SECRET

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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To: MOSCOW
AMMAN
BEIRUT
CAIRO

DAMASCUS

JIDDA

TEL AVIV

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